

may take. But this I promise: I will stand up for American interests and the interests of a cleaner environment. And if the United States has to be the only nation to stand against the biodiversity treaty as now drawn, so be it.

I believe deeply in protecting our com-

mon environment, and I will proudly present in Rio the U.S. record that is second to none anywhere in the world.

Note: The President spoke at 7:50 a.m. at Andrews Air Force Base in Camp Springs, MD.

Remarks at a Luncheon Hosted by President Guillermo Endara in Panama City, Panama

June 11, 1992

The President. Mr. President and Mr. Vice President and members of the Cabinet, Barbara and I are just delighted to be with you to witness firsthand the great progress that Panama has made since its liberation from that dictatorship and tyranny back in December 1989. Panama is once again free, democracy restored, and the rule of law prevails.

With your nation's return to democracy, Panama resumes its place in the world community. This country's path toward economic reform and also liberalization has rekindled economic enterprise. And maybe some don't realize it, but last year your nation's economic growth was the highest in the whole hemisphere. I salute your success and your efforts, which bring the prospect of a better future for all Panamanians.

Our countries have enjoyed a unique partnership since Panama gained its independence nearly 90 years ago. That partnership is embodied today in the 1977 Panama Canal treaties. Mr. President, let me just assure you the United States keeps its word: Those treaties will be fully implemented on schedule.

But what I really wanted to do to come

here was to salute those of you in this room who stood up to the tyranny of Noriega and who dared to oppose him in the 1989 elections and who now have the responsibility for strengthening your democracy for future generations.

As we were riding in in the car I sensed a little nervousness on the part of my friend President Endara. I think he was worried that I might be offended by some show of protest. But what I saw and felt was that overwhelming welcome from the people along the streets. It expressed, I think, a genuine friendship between Panama and the United States. And for the tiny, tiny handful of people that are protesting, I said they ought to go up to San Francisco and get an idea what a real protest is like. *[Laughter]*

So we've been here, and we are very grateful to you. We salute you. And I would like to just propose a toast to the health of President and Mrs. Endara and to that lasting, strengthening friendship between Panama and the United States of America.

Note: The President spoke at 1:15 p.m. at the Presidential Palace.

Remarks to the American Community in Panama City

June 11, 1992

Thank you so very, very much for that warm welcome. And General Joulwan, thank you for the introduction. And may I salute

not only the general but also Ambassador Hinton, our distinguished Ambassador. He and Mrs. Hinton, Mrs. Joulwan, and